

## **“More Europe on Defense” Seminar Rome 14-15 March 2013**

### ***THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED EUROPEAN EDUCATION AND TRAINING APPROACH***

Reflections on the importance of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation being part of the education and professional training of diplomats and members of armed forces of EU countries.

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Arms control and disarmament were initially pursued for humanitarian reasons as a reaction to the excessive suffering of combatants in the wars fought in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the introduction of nuclear weapons, strategic balance and conflict prevention became the main rationale for arms control and disarmament. In periods of financial austerity, reduction of a costly and destabilizing arms race adds another rationale for pursuing such a goal.

The results achieved in the disarmament and non-proliferation fields in the past decades are significant: at the climax of the cold war, nuclear weapon countries possessed around 60.000 warheads; today their estimated number is less than 20,000. Chemical and biological weapons are totally prohibited; similar arrangements are in force for anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions. Since 1996 almost all UN member states have committed not to test nuclear weapons; the few countries that conducted nuclear tests after that date (India, Pakistan and DPRK) have been condemned by the UN Security Council. Efforts are being made to prevent an arms race in outer space and to establish regulations for the use of “cyber weapons”.

Disarmament and non-proliferation education has been one of the main features of the United Nations activities in the field of arms control. A UN General Assembly

Resolution, sponsored by several EU countries, is regularly being approved on this subject. In 2002 a UN study on disarmament education was adopted. The study invites, inter alia, member states to inform the UN on the steps taken in the field of arms control education. The Secretary General is requested to prepare a biannual report reviewing results and new opportunities for promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education. This subject also appears among the consensual conclusions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. On January 18 of this year, responding to a recommendation by his Advisory Board on disarmament matters, the UN Secretary General delivered a major speech focused on the priority of disarmament education at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, whose James Martin Center for Nonproliferation is one of the main centers of excellence worldwide on arms control.

The EU's commitment in the field of non-proliferation and arms control runs deep and has made significant contributions to the peace and stability Europe has enjoyed since the end of the Second World War. The 2003 Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the multiplicity of documents and initiatives adopted in its wake, together with substantial financing, allowed the EU to acquire a leading position in the non-proliferation and arms control field and in strengthening treaties adhered to by EU Member States. The role played by the EU in the Six party talks with Iran and in the preparation of a Conference on a Zone Free of WMDs and their delivery means in the Middle East, is just the latest indication of such capabilities.

European diplomats have for years been the protagonists of weapons agreements and non-proliferation negotiations in bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral fora. Members of armed forces, the only ones entitled to the eventual use of weapons in an international environment and called to physically implement disarmament agreements, are also engaged in such negotiations as well as in international peace keeping operations where knowledge of international rules is essential. Both diplomats and militaries must work together to ensure that arms control and arms reductions do not jeopardize European security. Not all European countries have responded to the UN General Assembly request for information on disarmament education and have included such issues in their academies and professional training curricula. According to the latest UN documents, Austria, Italy and Spain report regularly on their disarmament educational activities and include them in some of their diplomatic and military curricula. In Italy education and training of diplomats and members of armed forces is promoted by a bipartisan parliamentary motion. The Italian Institute of High Defense Studies organizes every year an ad hoc ten days seminar on humanitarian and arms control issues.

**A systematic effort should be made by all EU partners in disarmament and non proliferation education and professional training, based on a preliminary survey of existing practices.**

**Disarmament and non- proliferations should become a mandatory teaching subject for military and diplomatic academies and institutes in Europe.**

**The creation of a disarmament manual for European diplomatic and military personnel should be envisaged.**

**A common EU report to UN requests in this field should be established.**

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